

# NEWS RELEASE from **WILLIAM O. LIPINSKI**

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## **Lipinski Re-Introduces Legislation to Modernize O'Hare and Expand Aviation Capacity**

[WASHINGTON, D.C.] Last night, Representative Bill Lipinski introduced the Aviation Capacity Expansion Act of 2003, H.R. 592. This measure passed the House of Representatives last Congress, but did not pass the Senate. H.R. 592 is the same version that passed the House in July of 2002 with overwhelming support.

"I am proud to reintroduce this measure that will expand and modernize O'Hare, keep downtown Meigs field open, create western road access into O'Hare and lay the groundwork for a new South Suburban airport in Peotone. It is important to pass this legislation on a federal level, or else we run the chance that we could get far into the modernization process at O'Hare, only to have a future Governor veto the project, thereby wasting billions of dollars," Lipinski said.

Illinois is the only state whereas the Governor has the power to not only veto a certificate of approval for the building of new runways, but also the power to **rescind** a certificate once it has been granted. The City of Chicago, whom owns and operates O'Hare Airport, is fearful of beginning the \$6.6 billion O'Hare construction process, only to have it stopped or completely undone. H.R. 592 would override the Illinois statute that allows a governor to stop the project after it has been approved by the state and has commenced in cooperation with the Federal Aviation Administration.

"This is an important measure not only to the Chicago region, but to the nation as a whole," Lipinski explained. "O'Hare, as the only major dual hub airport in America, is the epicenter of commercial aviation in this country. This bill would greatly eliminate delays at O'Hare that cause congestion across the whole aviation landscape."

The reconfiguring of the current 1950s style of intersecting runways with 21<sup>st</sup> century parallel runways would reduce delays by up to 79 percent in good weather and up to 95 percent in bad weather conditions. By having parallel runways that will decrease the chance of runway incidents, safety will also be increased.

"Last summer we worked on a bipartisan basis to carefully craft a measure that would reduce congestion, increase safety, protect the environment, and mitigate noise pollution for the millions of residents whom reside near O'Hare. I look forward to working with my colleagues in the House, and with Senator Durbin and Members of his chamber to pass this legislation into law this Congress," said Lipinski.